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SUBJECT: U/S DOBRIANSKY MEETS WITH POLISH MINISTERS OF
ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMY

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11. This cable contains a guidance request. See para. 8.

12. (SBU) On April 14, Under Secretary of State Paula Dobriansky met with Polish Minister of Environment Maciej Nowicki and Minister of Economy Waldemar Pawlak to discuss the upcoming United Nations Framework on Climate Change's fourteenth Conference of the Parties (COP-14). COP-14 will be held in Poznan December 1-12. In both meetings, Dobriansky stressed that a comprehensive agreement on climate change must contain binding agreements for both developing and developed countries. Environment Minister Nowicki stated that a planning conference for COP-14 will be held in Warsaw in October, and he may visit the United States in September. He believes COP-14 needs to develop concrete steps to address climate change, and to showcase specific examples of technology transfer. Economy Minister Pawlak stated he wants to organize a meeting of about 30 ministers of economy before COP-14 to discuss the "sectoral approach" to climate change. Dobriansky welcomed Pawlak's interest in exploring the sectoral approach before Poznan, and committed to provide a readout of her discussions in Paris. U/S Dobriansky was joined on her visit by Dean Pittman of the Secretary's Policy Planning Staff and Dan Rochberg, Special Assistant to U/S Dobriansky.

End summary.

Environment Ministry on COP-14

13. (SBU) The discussion at the Ministry of Environment began with Dobriansky asking Minister Nowicki how he envisions COP-14. Nowicki responded that he sees a change in attitudes about climate change since the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) published its last report in March 2007. He said there is no longer any doubt that climate change is due to human activity. The only question is to what extent human activity is responsible. He added that the United States seems to be modifying its attitude toward climate change and acknowledging the role of human activity. Consequently, Nowicki believes COP-14 will take place at an opportune time to consider climate change programs. Nowicki stated future discussions must look at highly specific steps if they are to be effective in dealing with climate change. He criticized what he termed the

"European strategy" of signing general agreements, claiming that results so far were "nothing more than paper." He described his goal for COP-14 as including side exhibits of concrete examples of technology development and transfer. Nowicki announced that a preliminary conference to prepare for COP-14 will be held October 12-14, most likely at the Warsaw Sheraton. He said he would invite thirty-five to forty officials from countries that were critically important in climate change issues, including the United States.

¶4. (SBU) Dobriansky commented that the key decision of the UN climate conference in Bali last December was that actions on climate change should be measurable, verifiable, and reportable. The United States wants a framework that is truly global, and would agree to binding commitments only if other major economies do as well. Minister Nowicki agreed, noting that within the next ten years, eighty percent of the increase in carbon dioxide emissions would come from China and other developing countries, and to exempt these countries would make climate change actions by the developed countries ineffective.

¶5. (SBU) Dobriansky asked whether Nowicki would visit the United States before COP-14. He responded that he would be very interested in coming to Washington, probably in September, and participating in a round table discussion of Poland's approach to climate change. Dobriansky encouraged him to go to the United States for this discussion, and to visit sites where he could observe exhibits of environmental technology.

Economy Ministry Seeks Meeting Regarding Sectoral Approach

¶6. (SBU) At the Ministry of Economy, Pawlak stated that,
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prior to COP-14, Poland would like to hold a meeting of Ministers of Economy from about 30 major economies -- both developed and developing -- aimed at exploring the "sectoral approach" to climate change. Pawlak particularly emphasized the importance of involving international corporations and representatives of internationalized industries -- such as steel or cement -- in such a discussion. The meeting would address the problem of applying national regulatory policies to international businesses. Pawlak stated he had already raised this idea with the OECD and the President of the International Atomic Energy Association, as well as EU Commissioner Verheugen. U.S. suggestions and participation would be essential, Pawlak stated. Marcin Korolec, Under Secretary of State in the Polish Ministry of Economy, is

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working on a proposed text addressing the question of how to allocate emissions allowances, especially outside the energy sector. He stated that the EU is trying to find an approach in which allowances are more closely linked to the net needs of a given industry, but this requires a global perspective. Pawlak noted that there will be an EU working group meeting in Bonn in June, where Poland plans to advance its proposal.

¶7. (SBU) Dobriansky welcomed Pawlak's interest in exploring the sectoral approach and the idea of holding a meeting before COP-14, noting that the USG -- especially through the Departments of Commerce, Energy and Treasury, with the Environmental Protection Agency -- is committed to engaging with business. Responding to Pawlak's request, Dobriansky offered to provide USG views on how such an effort might be organized. Dobriansky stated that the COP-14 is a bridge to the later meeting in Copenhagen, which should culminate in an international agreement on climate change. The U.S. will make a substantial commitment, but she stressed consensus across the U.S. political spectrum that a comprehensive agreement must contain measurable, verifiable and reportable commitments for both developed and developing countries.

Obligations would be common but differentiated. Financing mechanisms and technology transfer should be priorities at COP-14. She specified the issue goes beyond simply setting up a fund, to looking holistically at economic reforms, energy security and other topics. She noted that on April 16 she would be in Paris, where the USG will be seeking ways to help the UN Framework Process, including long-term goals, short-term goals, technology, practical financing and how to measure progress. Dobriansky committed to provide the Polish government with a readout of the Paris discussions. Dobriansky also noted that the U.S. will table a text at the G-8 summit in Japan. She also said she would suggest colleagues working on sectoral issues consider visiting Warsaw, and offered help to set up meetings for Pawlak's upcoming visit to Washington.

Guidance Request

18. (U) Post requests a readout of the Paris meetings to pass to Polish officials, as discussed in U/S Dobriansky's meeting with the Minister of Economy Pawlak.

19. (U) This cable was cleared by U/S Dobriansky.
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